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Fire Officials Determine West Springfield Fatal Fire Not a Deliberate Act

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan and West Springfield Fire Chief William M. Flaherty announced that their joint investigation into the December 13, 2011, fatal fire at 332 Sibley Avenue has ruled out a deliberate act as a cause of the fire. The fire took the life of the homeowner Michael Stump. No one else was home at the time of the fire.

The exact cause of the fire will remain undetermined. State Fire Marshal Coan said, "Investigators have been able to rule out that a deliberate act caused the fire because the residence was secure, the State Police Crime Lab detected no ignitable liquids on the samples they tested and there was no sign of a suicide attempt."

Flaherty said, "Police responded to the home two days prior to this fire and found Mr. Stump had started a fire in the fireplace without opening the damper filling the home with smoke. The police were able to remedy the situation without summoning the fire department."

The Office of the State Medical Examiner has not concluded its report into the cause and manner of death of Mr. Stump, but was able to identify him for the family through a forensic examination.

The fire was jointly investigated by the West Springfield Fire and Police Departments, State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to Hampden District Attorney Mark Mastroianni's Office.

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